



## Supreme Court of Appeals State of West Virginia

# News

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### **Wood County Juvenile Drug Court holds opening ceremony** **For immediate release Tuesday, March 1, 2011**

PARKERSBURG, W.Va. – Supreme Court Justice Brent Benjamin was the keynote speaker today at a ceremony celebrating the opening of the Putnam County Juvenile Drug Court.

The ceremony was held at noon today in the Donald Black Building in Parkersburg. Other speakers included Circuit Judge Robert A. Waters of the Fourth Judicial Circuit (Wood and Wirt Counties), Supreme Court Director of Probation Services Mike Lacy, and Dale Humphreys, Director of the West Virginia Division of Juvenile Services.

The program is among ten juvenile drug courts in West Virginia.

“Wood County has taken a wonderful step in helping the children and families who have experienced the horrible effects of drug abuse,” said Justice Benjamin. “By the establishment of a juvenile drug court, Wood County now has a proven alternative to drug issues which will create a positive change in the lives of young people. I am grateful to the efforts of Family Court Judge Tallman and the entire drug court team for volunteering their time and energy to this wonderful endeavor.”

As of January 1, 45 youths had graduated from the four programs that were in operation before July 1, 2010. The Cabell County program and Wayne County programs were established under Supreme Court supervision in 2007 and the Logan County and Mercer County programs in 2009. Other programs have opened since July 1 in Brooke/Hancock, Lincoln/Boone, Monongalia, Randolph, and Putnam Counties.

Juvenile drug courts are cooperative efforts of the juvenile justice, social service, law enforcement and education systems in West Virginia. They divert non-violent youths ages 10 to 17 who abuse alcohol or drugs from the juvenile court system into an intensive, individualized treatment process which includes parental involvement and cooperation.

Juvenile drug court programs include intensive out-patient drug and alcohol treatment, intensive probation case management and compliance monitoring. Each juvenile drug court has four phases. The time a participant spends in the program varies according to that person’s needs, but is at least six months. Six months of aftercare also is offered to each participant.

Juvenile drug courts are paid for with legislative funds, grant funds and other funds made to the West Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals Administrative Office. Each county selected for a juvenile drug court has the support of county officials, including a circuit judge, a sufficient juvenile case load and substance abuse indicator data to support the program.

The goal of juvenile drug courts is to prevent participants from having any further contact with the juvenile justice system by helping each youth learn to deal with challenges as they arise and increasing family self-sufficiency.

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